

Poets and their predicates

By Denis Donoghue

DAVID KALSTONE:

Five Temperaments
222pp. Oxford University Press.
£6.25.

David Kalstone's book is a study of five contemporary or recent poets in terms of "the ways poets find to write about their lives", the relation between life and work, temperament and style. The poets are Elizabeth Bishop, Robert Lowell, James Merrill, Adrienne Rich, and John Ashbery; chosen apparently because of their diversity, the different ways in which their poems try to make sense of their lives. Mr Kalstone is concerned with "the varying possibilities of writing about the self", and he believes that many of these possibilities are fulfilled in his five poets.

The poets are studied separately, for the most part: points of contrast and comparison are made from time to time but Mr Kalstone's procedure is to concentrate upon each poet, responding to the movements of feeling as the chosen poems enact them. Writing about Elizabeth Bishop's poems, he is observant, offering a response in which the poet's tenderness towards the given occasion is answered by his own tenderness towards the decorum and risk of the verse. Noting that changes of feeling are often given in the poems as changes of perspective and scale, he waits upon those gestures, and alerts the reader to recognise them. The words are pondered with critical exactitude, in recognition of the poet's tact and care, her "sense of the encircling and eroding powers in whose presence all minute observations are valuably made".

Mr Kalstone does not explain precisely how the observations continue to be valuable, despite the "eroding powers", but by the end of the chapter we feel that the value does not need to be justified, it is what Elizabeth Bishop's humanity comes to, whether it saves the world or not. Besides, her most achieved poems convince us that almost anything seen, heard, registered is worthwhile, for Henry James's reason,

because it involves impressions. Hopkins said that what you look hard at seems to look hard at you. With Elizabeth Bishop's poems in mind, one might say that what you look at carefully seems to respond to your care as if it wanted to make your attention worthwhile.

Mr Kalstone reads Robert Lowell's poems, mostly between *Life Studies* and *History*, in terms of the abstractions of self and history, each an intractable part of the other. He is especially vivid in describing the restiveness with which Lowell's poems inhabit their present tense. James Merrill, revisionist motive is seen mainly in poems from *Water Street* and *Nights and Days*, culminating in "The Book of Ephraim". Autobiography in Merrill means the revision of experience, an essay in fiction as much as transcription; the poetry does not take dictation from the life but transforms the events of that life into productive fictions. The difference between the event and its after-image in the poem is the poet's freedom.

The past is required not merely to have happened but to have survived its time by remaining. In its provoked spirit, sufficient to some current need. Fiction is the outward sign of an imagination intervening to convert circumstance to human use. Merrill's poems are never troubled by the thought of being untrue to the past. The past is not sacred in every attribute: only its readiness to be transformed is sacred. The active element in Merrill's apparently autobiographical poems shows how much of his circumstance he is prepared to shelve so that the remaining past, transfigured, may live in him not as gone time but as a constituent of the freedom. The vic and dash of his poems are further evidence of that freedom; so also the swarm of his impressions.

Mr Kalstone's chapter on Adrienne Rich is mainly concerned with her effort not to revise her past but to release herself from its archives. Consciousness in her poetry aspires to a morality of communication; the poems are often about the determination to enter into communion with someone she loves. The question of the poetry

turns upon the images to which she consigns that effort, and the degree of trust which they deserve. Mr Kalstone's account of the effort is engaging and engaged, but it hardly stresses sufficiently the change of emphasis, from knowledge to desire, in Adrienne Rich's recent poems. Desire is the current form of their force. Mr Kalstone speaks, near the end, of "the ardor for a knowledge of human relations which has animated much of Rich's work", but it is my impression that her later poems treat knowledge as a belated accomplishment.

The chapter on John Ashbery speaks of his sense of the discontinuity of past and present, and of his attempts to devise a style in which the predicament may be decently inhabited. Ashbery's poems seem to me to take an entirely reasonable pleasure in the miscellany of things without irritating themselves about the source of that reason. His sense of life seems to intimate that everything is possible while nothing particular is necessary and that a poet's mind may live, not unduly dismayed, in that mystery.

Writing of the relation between life and work, Mr Kalstone uses a traditional vocabulary: he speaks of self, person, individuality, tone, and voice, ascribing these marks to a personal origin and source in each case. He adverts to the subterfuges which may be involved in such terms, but he does not let that consideration deflect him from his chosen idiom. If he has entertained any doubt about the validity of personal terms, he has quickly suppressed the doubt. There is no sign that he is worried by the political accusations directed from Paris against the personal idiom. Ronald Barthes and other critics have asserted that the terminology is bogus. Capitalist ideology, Barthes maintains, has attached the greatest importance to the "person" of the author, and as a result the image of literature to be found in ordinary culture is tyrannically centred on the author: his person, his life, his tastes, his passion.

Barthes would hold that *Five Temperaments* endorses that tyranny and strengthens it by giving it an ostensibly natural syntax. Indeed,

assumptions embodied in a style as urbane as Mr Kalstone's are difficult to attack. It is not my business to attack them, especially since I share them, but I wish he had taken a few pages to defend them in any case and to strike a blow for the personal vocabulary he uses. We are in trouble if such words as self, person, subject, author, voice, and tone have to be justified before they can be used, but we cannot take their validity for granted, we must earn it. Mr Kalstone does not feel the need; he assumes that the author is the past of his poems, their personal origin. He silently refuses to regulate objects by processes and functions, or persons by zeroes of impersonal relations. When he refers to a relation, he takes as valid and not specious the existence, with a sufficient degree of autonomy in each case, of the objects it implicates. If James Merrill, son of Charles E. Merrill, is the subject, "The Broken Home" and other poems make the predicate. The relation, the line of force, between subject and predicate is Mr Kalstone's concern; how to get from subject to predicate, assuming the validity of both terms, the direction they imply, and the poetic imagination which effects the transition. Poet and poetry are in a relation of before and after; the poet precedes his poem and produces it. Barthes rejects these axioms, of course, and insists that we must read a poem on the assumption that its poet is simultaneous with the text as an event in language. Every utterance becomes a performative utterance; nothing is transcribed, recorded, or dredged.

I am on Mr Kalstone's side in this question, but I think him a little too suppliant in the silent assumption that we are right and bound to preserve the relation between what a poet has been given (body, family, education, luck, passion, and so forth) and what he has made of it. Of course there is a way to the veil. He asks the reader to interest himself in the relation between what a poet has been given (body, family, education, luck, passion, and so forth) and what he has made of it. Of course there is a way to the veil. He asks the reader to interest himself in the relation between what a poet has been given (body, family, education, luck, passion, and so forth) and what he has made of it.

I think I know why Mr Kalstone is not troubled by these questions. His normal method in his work is to concentrate his account on the more exact form of the poem, when the detail becomes complex. He loves to sway with the rhythm, dancing the attitude of

"I of autobiography", but I know what he means. An unfocused account of autobiography is hardly as casual. Again he is troubled by "I" who enters in the fifth stanza of "Skunk Hour" disguised like a well enough to tell a lie: One dark night, my Tudor Ford climbed the hill. I watched for love-car.

It is a lie, if the question is of true and false. Lowell is a record as saying, and Mr Kalstone quotes the record, that watching-lovers came not from his life but from Whitman's. Lowell crosses the anecdote about Whitman and took it upon himself to confess a sin you have not committed should be of interest to a biographer and to a reader of supposedly autobiographical poems. Of course there is a way to the veil. He asks the reader to interest himself in the relation between what a poet has been given (body, family, education, luck, passion, and so forth) and what he has made of it. Of course there is a way to the veil. He asks the reader to interest himself in the relation between what a poet has been given (body, family, education, luck, passion, and so forth) and what he has made of it.

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metaphrase is as sinuous as the line he is reading. Quoting a line from Elizabeth Bishop, he says, "a shared pleasure in the work." A shared pleasure in the work? A shared pleasure in the work? A shared pleasure in the work?

This latter notion I take from Gadamer's account of the word *Erläutern* in his *Truth and Method*, where he traces the meanings of the word in Dilthey, Husserl, and others: consciousness and intention seem to be necessarily active before an experience can be properly so called. I am not sure whether or not this accords with Mr Kalstone's sense of the word. Again, there is the question of memory. Mr Kalstone seems to use it in a sense to be conveyed by fairly casual reference to Wordsworth and Proust, but the word has a more esoteric provenance than that; so I am not sure how much weight Mr Kalstone intends to bear in his chapters on Elizabeth Bishop and Robert Lowell.

I seem to be fussing about terms, and it may be felt that I am asking Mr Kalstone to write a different book; denying him the freedom of choosing his words and using them as he pleases. Would I be happier if his book were *Five Forms of Discourse* rather than *Five Temperaments*? As it happens, I would like to read a book of that title, but not instead of *Five Temperaments*. But I suspect

that if you were in bring Barthesian terms to bear upon the question of ostensibly autobiographical poetry, you would have to make the meaning of discourse and language capacious enough to let you smuggle back into your pages nearly all the topics you had so nobly vetoed. Under different names, of course. And even if you converted experience into the tropes of rhetoric, you would look for a rhetoric good enough to register the forces of common experience you had ejected along with their common names.

There are other sponges too, other expurgations.

Mr Kalstone's five poets are, as different as he says they are. The differences have provoked him to his most sensitive and telling criticism. I happened to read Richard Sennett's *The Fall of Public Man* alongside *Five Temperaments*, and found them mutually implicative. Sennett's book tries to explain among many other symptoms of the fall of public man, the modern anxiety about feeling. Am I feeling enough? Should I not be feeling more in these circumstances? More intensely? And is my experience authentic? Sennett explains, to my rueful satisfaction, how this morbid anxiety has come about. He does not go to the poets for his texts, but some of Mr Kalstone's five would be found salient to his concerns. Adrienne Rich and Robert Lowell have been especially nerve-ridden about their feelings, irritable in stance and irritated in frequently specific by the vagaries of their feelings; too much, or not enough.

James Merrill's poems see no good cause for flying off the handle; they assume that it is still not too late for wit, poise, and grace. But "The Book of Ephraim" has his principled Elizabeth Bishop seems, more than the other poets, in continuous possession of her feelings; if she is shaken, it is not as a leaf. She seems to know the possibilities and the limits of poetry and to have signed the contract in both clauses. John Ashbery is often dismayed by his feelings, but he has not given up on them and he finds much poetry in their antics. Glossing one of Ashbery's poems, Mr Kalstone says that "the elation we feel comes from the writer's own unwillingness to take permanent shelter in his work". Tentative shelter, tentative anchorage; not a habit, but a stance, not achieved composure but reasonable trust that composure is possible. Mr Kalstone admires in Ashbery's poems their way with feeling, the "free and flexible voice" he hears in "Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror". So the book ends with the critic unrepentantly pointing to a poet's achievement in terms of voice, manner, style of being in the world. The achievement is linguistic, indeed, but not in any sense which makes language prior to the act of the entire person. According to the terms of the critique, there is no contradiction: a vocabulary of personal terms is valid. I hope Mr Kalstone is right, and that the truth of his idiom, however sharply interrogated and perhaps denied, will indeed prevail.

There Come Days To The Hills

Of Armadas about to set out —
Flesh medieval paintwork
Dragons on mainstays
A shouting throughout heaven

The moorlines cast off ropes, leaving their sides
Patched with harbour reflections
Turn into the light, nosing the distance
Strain in position, fluttering pennants

And the light itself leans taut
Tacking overtaking returning
Urgent and important

Everywhere exhilarated water

Open the sheep, standing windslapped
High in rigging
Look heroic

Every flashing face gazes westward—

Ted Hughes



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MACMILLAN PRESS

The manufacturing interest

By Roy Porter

JOHN MONEY:
Experience and Identity
Birmingham and the West Mid-
lands 1760-1800
312pp. Manchester University
Press. £9.95.

Over the past decade, our understanding of the politics of Stuart England has been profoundly challenged by studies of county communities by such scholars as Alan Everitt, Peter Clark and John Morrill. John Money's richly textured and astute book will, one hopes, launch a parallel exploration of the Georgian localities for which it will serve as a fine model. Dr Money's chosen subject presupposes the economic background masterfully traced in W. H. B. Court's *Rise of the Midlands Industries*, and looks forward to the confident, bustling Birmingham of the Chamberlains, so well chronicled by Asa Briggs. What would be the political education of this honeycomb of workshops and thriving entrepreneurs? The experience would be won, both through promoting its own direct interests, such as canals, in George III's world of "Lordly Power", and through responding to national events such as the American and French Revolutions. What identity would be forged out of this experience?

Dr Money fixes his attention on the sequence of characteristic stages and crises which constituted the West Midlands political experience. He examines the agitation against the Cider Tax and Stamp Act in the 1760s; the growing electoral assertiveness which led to Sir Charles Holt's victory in the Warwickshire contest of 1774—in effect the first "Birmingham" MP; the commercial anxiety, triggered off by the American troubles; and later, in the face of Pitt's economic policies towards Ireland and France, the short-lived activities of the General Chamber of Manufacturers, the triumvirate of Samuel Garbett, Josiah Wedgwood and Matthew Boulton in the van. And then finally, the response to the French Revolution, grimly parodied in Birmingham by the Church and King riots of 1793.

Dr Money probes the impact of this chain of events on Midlands communities already proud of their economic muscle. He discovers a new-found self-expression, cultivated through schools, friendly clubs and coffee-houses, masonic lodges, libraries and debating societies, finding outlet in entertainments like the theatre and concerts, and fashionable charades like the Birmingham General Hospital, and echoed in the press, particularly in Birmingham's *Gazette* and *Journal's Coventry Mercury*.

Birmingham was free to follow its own commercial nose, for it was not bound to a corporation, and, in the words of its contemporary historian, William Hutton, "a town without a charter is a town without a shackle". But that freedom also carried the risk of dangerous division and incision. Birmingham was—to quote Hutton once again—"a body without a head". It was to pay for its own stubborn refusal to finance an adequate civic police in the destructive horrors of the Priestley riots.

Dr Money convincingly underlines three themes. The first is that we must be careful not to presuppose or predetermine a coherent and consistent political voice in the West Midlands, effective in lobbying for well-defined goals. Birmingham's response to the Stamp Act was as ambivalent as William and Liberty remained marginal to the West Midlands. Warwickshire was not a petitioning county in 1769. Similarly, the "mob" which ran amok in 1793 was not an endemic feature of politics, a sub-plot, awaiting official license to be unleashed; it was new. The riots created the mob no less than the mob the riots.

Here Dr Money would rightly restrain the precipitate historian from concluding that the function of convivial societies, such as the proto-Rotarian "Beau Club", or of newspapers, was primarily political. Rather, their job was to articulate and integrate the community, to give coherence to myriad individual and conflicting economic interests.

As the publican poet John Keats said,

We cherish the Arts, UNANIMITY

And make it our rule to be

MERRY and WISE,

From UNITY'S BANDS never seem

to depart,

For FRIENDSHIP is rooted in each

joyful heart.

Thus members of the "Beau Club", for instance, did not cast their votes as a caucus—indeed surprisingly few voted at all in the critical Warwickshire poll of 1774. Only in the 1790s did the Club become heavily involved in anti-revolutionary politics. Likewise, Ari's Birmingham Gazette, while a platform for a range of controversial issues, Aris no doubt feared loss of readers if he displayed partisanship, but he also possessed a shrewd grasp of the value of harmony to the community. Only the most banal slogans of political consensus, such as "Independence" and "Virtue", secured free passage.

The second theme developed by Dr Money is that West Midlands masters astutely recognized their need to operate within the delicate Georgian political machinery of deference, patronage, personal influence, and noble, latent control. Manufacturers like Boulton and Josiah Wedgwood saw how the region's prosperity depended on supplying fashionable and luxury markets, which they dared not risk antagonizing. They knew very well that the bargaining position of Midlands capitalists was far too weak to bully Westminster. Local interests were better served by winning the friendly offices of sitting landowners. MP's like Sir Robert Dutton and Thomas Skipton, or the Earl of Darlington (men who frequently themselves had a stake in iron and coal) rather than the campaigning for parliamentary reform alongside Christopher Wyvill's Yorkshire Association or

the Society for Constitutional Information. Stealth was the watchword for Wedgwood in soliciting Parliamentary support for the Trent and Mersey Canal, holding back "a bustle, a popular battle", as a last resort. Similarly, in organizing manufacturers' petitions against economic slump, Samuel Garbett was anxious that only men of substance should be signatories.

Not surprisingly, then, electoral politics in Worcester, Warwick, Coventry and neighbouring constituencies continued to be waged within the well-worn country, opposition rhetoric of independence, Freeholders' Rights, Englishmen's Liberties, and hatred of Despotism and Corruption. As yet there was no independent bourgeois or manufacturing ideology to give a distinctive language to Midlands politics. Sir Charles Holt may have aided his election for Warwickshire in 1774 largely to the support of Birmingham electors, but to call him the "nominee" of the "manufacturing gentry" would be (as Dr Money rightly insists) unwarranted: there is no evidence that he acted as such, or was expected to.

The obverse of this is Dr Money's third theme. When the West Midlands did become embroiled in the political arena, it was in fundamental issues of national and imperial politics, the community split down the middle, and lost effectiveness as a pressure group and its harmony as a cohesive economic force. Thus the century began to lose orders from 1774 as a result of the collision course taken by Britain and the American colonies. But, as Dr Money shows in his chapter "The War for America", the community was utterly divided over the principles of Coercion or Cancellation, and no more agreed as to whether commercial expediency demanded that the colonies be brought to heel, or granted independence. At the height of the American War, Josiah Wedgwood wrote, after an

Etruria dinner party, "We had but little discussion upon politics, the company being so much divided upon that subject, it might have broke in upon our harmony".

Similarly, whereas the abolition of the slave trade could command a consensus, the French Revolution polarized opinion totally. Initial enthusiasm among intellectuals such as the Lunar Society group gave rise to only a muted radicalism. Both the Society for Constitutional Information and artisan Jacobinism secured a much weaker foothold in Birmingham and the Potteries than at Sheffield, Norwich and Manchester, and they were staunchly countered by the authentic voice of Church-and-King loyalism, aimed above all against the local target of radical Unitarianism.

In its search for political identity, Birmingham was thus left temporarily in limbo by the riots of 1793. Sympathy for constitutional liberalism, advancing from the 1760s, had been commandeered—and thence discredited—by enthusiastic anti-Tax and anti-Corruption Acts radicals. In reaction, the 1790s sprouted a swaggering and repressive loyalism which itself deepened social divisions. Not until the next century did Birmingham firmly establish its distinctive political via media of economic reform, thrift, self-help, and municipal improvement, which successfully fused the class antagonism in the name of a wider community identity.

That a region bristling with manufacturers should have produced a local politics of pragmatic self-interest is no great surprise. Nor is the accompanying trend in public entertainments—the state was gravitating now towards the classical and the classical theatre. But that does not detract from Dr Money's perception in tracing these strands or his skill in bringing such ample evidence to bear.

The interdependency of economic interest and politics, however, have been less fully explored. Dr Money should have extended his horizon to discuss the structure of industry, distribution of wealth, and the first chapter opens with an account of the Birmingham municipal reform, which was hardly a pure or views, till the conclusion of the nineteenth century. Science at the West and East Midlands, in particular, would have been a needed perspective.

Conspicuously absent from this book, however, is an analysis of the social structure. Dissent—a curious omission—this was the rock upon which unity was to founder, when the economic and social structure of the divide between Church and Chapel? Were such tensions, pally fanned by national events? Was Old Dissent unwillingly from its political nation by the Birmingham Royal Manx? Why was a militant Anglican parson able to penetrate the infrastructure of the West Midlands? The West Midlands have been chapters on new clubs, but none on Church of Chapel. The Worcester parson's stability of the material modernizing industrial demands further exploration.

Dr Money's book is a gem read, but the reader's reward. A few more such judicious scholarly studies, shall no longer be able to airily of the provinces of rise as if such a phrase encapsulate the whole of diverse experience.

The Mancunian model

By Michael Neve

ROBERT H. KARGON:
Science in Victorian Manchester
Enterprise and Expertise
Shepp, Manchester University Press.
£11.50.

The history of science in Britain is the same time a history of local and civic quirkiness. Science, in fact, is a very different animal in the confines of New-

castle or Bristol or Edinburgh. Natural philosophy took on different, and often colorful, depending on the local geology and proximity of coalfields; on the political attitudes of local elites and the nature of their wealth and social status; on the distance of the place from London. Enlightenment Edinburgh produced the highest theoretical advances, fuelled on the one hand by the town council, and originating in the austere elegance of the New Town. Newcastle showed a more utilitarian approach, with a keenness to receive, and to improve, receiving, somewhat negatively, a degree of serious attention. Why was the Birmingham Royal Manx parson able to penetrate the infrastructure of the West Midlands? The West Midlands have been chapters on new clubs, but none on Church of Chapel. The Worcester parson's stability of the material modernizing industrial demands further exploration.

William Sturgeon, brought up in the hard school of army lecturing, became in 1840 the superintendent of the Royal Victoria Gallery and soon met the young J. P. Joule, a discoverer of the law of conservation of energy. A new order was being built. Copal, which was still being tipped to natural theology and the wonders of creation, but it was progress that held the keys to the future: progress, for example, in economic geography. While Charles Lyell fiddled, Edward Blyney helped launch the Manchester Geological Society. Blyney collaborated in detailed local geology with his friend John Leigh. Leigh was also a surgeon, an expert in gas analysis, and an ardent advocate of cholera. The mid-century belonged to the bourgeoisie, as it should. Kargon says that it remained "tainted with amateurism", but that amateurism has produced good science at the very time when the world has been turned into a pejorative expression.

We now await the coming of the "civic scientist". In the case of Manchester, as Kargon brings out beautifully, this was essentially the creation of Justus von Liebig of Gießen, the European chemist who had been called. The roll-call of Liebig's students, the most famous British example being Lyon Playfair, is extraordinary. Liebig, through his laboratory and his network of pupils, virtually created the science of chemistry in Victorian Manchester. A rush of his students (Playfair, Gilbert, Crace-Calvert) came to the city in the 1840s and 1850s to launch a programme of practical chemistry. The ground had been prepared for them by Liebig himself, who addressed the 1837 meeting of the British Association, bringing with him that great gift of industry to agriculture, artificial fertilizers. There is a powerful historical coincidence between the state of chemical technology in the 1840s, and the world of the Anti-Corn Law League and the war against soil exhaustion and the Malthusian spectre. Liebig wrote to Peel in March 1843:

"I have a peculiar fascination. As well known, Manchester is a city of shocks. With its own history, its own political representation until the Great Reform Act, and mastered by a political class often divided and suffering from religious exclusion, Manchester produced a strong hybrid. Between the extraordinary novelty and menace of its economic forms and the reputation of its elite, new cultures and new types seemed inevitable. Henry, chemical manufacturer, philosopher; John Dalton, whose theory was past thought up while making geological observations in the Alps; Charles White, surgeon and apostle of cleanliness in

the history of my writing this letter is to acquaint you with the fact that there exist in England layers of fossil genius that exist in a quantity sufficient to produce her with opportunities for centuries to come. . . . These layers are the corporatives discovered by Dr Buckland. . . . As this material must acquire great value I was led to consider that I might draw from my discovery the advantage for myself. . . . [But] as a man of science and not of Commerce I have thought it preferable to communicate my discoveries to her Majesty's government.

A profitable economy, explored by science: how could it fail? Liebig provided Manchester with its ideology of the civil science, and Kargon rightly makes this science to one of its greatest features: public health. The study of the public health movement has generated distinguished research, but lost among historians of medicine, and one of the main issues is the extent to which public health was really only a programme, an ideological statement of intent, rather than an achieved social reform. The testimony of a new order was being built. Copal, which was still being tipped to natural theology and the wonders of creation, but it was progress that held the keys to the future: progress, for example, in economic geography. While Charles Lyell fiddled, Edward Blyney helped launch the Manchester Geological Society. Blyney collaborated in detailed local geology with his friend John Leigh. Leigh was also a surgeon, an expert in gas analysis, and an ardent advocate of cholera. The mid-century belonged to the bourgeoisie, as it should. Kargon says that it remained "tainted with amateurism", but that amateurism has produced good science at the very time when the world has been turned into a pejorative expression.

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its scientific life in their professional haven, as if in another world. And of course lurking behind these pages is that other German observer, Friedrich Engels. If the history of Manchester is looked at in one way, it is almost a history of two versions of Germany, and the progressive idea, a vision of that German bourgeoisie and scientist, Prince Albert. It is the story of civic virtue, of the successful interaction of sciences such as chemistry and technical processes in textiles for example, and always accompanied by the valiant struggle against public decay and immiseration. But if Manchester itself were to become central, the picture would look different, and the position of "science" in an actual northern city would become more doubtful. There have been other words to hear from the German opposition.

This all happened in the nick of time, as German technology in chemistry, once Liebig's gift to Manchester, now created a horde of Kargon shows, nearly how alertness to this industrial danger came from an immigrant, Ivan Levinstein, graduate of the Technische Hochschule and Berlin University. This distinguished immigrant contribution continued into the expanding world of the new university of Manchester and especially in its physics laboratory, which was restructured and advanced by Arthur Schuster, the son of a wealthy Jewish textile merchant of Frankfurt. Throughout his time at the university, Schuster continued to think widely and progressively on all kinds of issues to do with science and science education. The culmination of this process was his selection of Ernest Rutherford for a place at Manchester, a choice which in turn generated a new cluster of pupils: Geiger, Bohr, C. G. Darwin and Moseley.

Kargon uses a conventional, Darwinian methodology through which to develop his account of Manchester science. "The emergence of Manchester as a world science centre of brilliance and productivity was," he writes, "the result of evolution through adaptation." But this is too easy. What, for example, can altogether escape environmental explanation, least of all in Manchester.

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DENT

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The River Wandle, Beddington

It roars beneath the pavement, then appears suddenly at your side, a guttersnipe, sparkling and larking, chucking out of pipes, busy as brass, though unemployed for years, its mills dismantled, glossy crosses stripped. A sunken hem of railway glinting past. Lego-nest thirties factories into rust and worn cement, is not more derelict.

It races for the parkland, anyway, and now you think you've understood its ruse—just to the willow-kissed, tin cans and newsprint with from scum, permission to decay granted to beauty now, as, once, to use.

Carol Rumens

By Walter Laqueur

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